

ARROW BOARD GAME

Cross-Reference to Related Applications

[0001] The present U.S. Patent application claims the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 60/445,416, filed on February 5, 2003, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

Field of the Disclosure

[0002] The present disclosure relates generally to board games. More particularly, it relates to rules and apparatus for a game for multiple players, where such apparatus may include two-sided game pieces bearing player alignment indicia and directional indicia on both sides. The object of the game is for players to attempt to turn all of the game pieces on a game board to display the same player alignment indicia, by using the directional indicia on each game piece.

Background of the Disclosure

[0003] Examples of board games wherein players turn two-sided game pieces include Othello, (Mattel, Inc.) and Reversi and are described in, for example, U.S. Patent Nos. 4,512,584, and 6,062,562, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

[0004] Examples of games including playing pieces bearing pointing indicia include U.S. Patent Nos. 2,571,195, 3,155,391, 3,608,904, 3,820,791, 3,856,309, 4,226,419, 4,200,768, and 4,331,333, the disclosures of which are hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety for all purposes. An example of a game including playing pieces bearing both directional indicia and player alignment indicia is Midway (Monarch Avalon, Inc.), the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety for all purposes.

Summary

[0005] Apparatus and a method for playing a board game are provided. The apparatus may include a game board and many-faced game pieces bearing plural indicia. Each face of each game piece may bear player alignment indicia, such as a color or a graphic image, and directional indicia, such as arrows. One embodiment uses square-shaped tile-like game pieces arranged on a grid-like playing surface.

[0006] Players may take turns either moving a game piece on a game board in a direction indicated on the piece or reorienting a game piece to indicate a different direction. If the directional indicia on a player's game piece points to an opponent's game piece, the player may gain control of the opponent's piece by turning it to display the player's alignment indicia. Players may thus attempt to control the board by turning all of the game pieces to display the same player alignment indicia.

[0007] Embodiments of the game according to this disclosure will be understood more readily after a consideration of the drawings and the Detailed Description.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0008] Fig. 1 depicts various game components suitable for use with one embodiment of the game, including several two-sided game pieces positioned on a game board.

[0009] Fig. 2 depicts the game board of Fig. 1.

[0010] Fig. 3 depicts the two-sided game pieces of Fig. 1, showing both faces of each game piece.

[0011] Figs. 4-13 depict a series of exemplary game movements that may be performed, using the game components of Fig. 1.

Detailed Description

[0012] An embodiment of the game is described with reference to the components illustrated in Figs. 1-3. Referring first to Fig. 1, Game 10 can be seen to include a playing surface or game board 12 and a plurality of game pieces 14. As will be explained, game board 12 and game pieces 14 may be marked with a variety of indicia including graphic representations. For example, the indicia used in the embodiment

illustrated in the drawings are based on the characters and monsters appearing in the *Yu-Gi-Oh!*™ television program.

[0013] Fig. 2 provides a more detailed view of game board 12. As shown, game board 12 is divided on one side into a plurality of square-shaped spaces 16 arranged in a 4 x 5 grid, to accommodate game pieces 14. Although a grid array of square-shaped spaces 16 are represented, other shapes and arrangements of spaces 16 are possible.

[0014] For example, other embodiments may include spaces shaped and arranged in a geometric pattern such as a grid of rectangles, triangles, hexagons, or in a regular or irregular array of a combination of shapes. Other embodiments may include spaces of circular, hexagonal or irregular shape, or may comprise a combination of different shapes. Optionally, some embodiments may include game boards with various numbers of spaces, the quantity and configuration of which may depend upon such factors as the number of game pieces used or the desired complexity of the game.

[0015] Game board 12 may further include functional or decorative indicia. For example, graphic representations such as those shown at 18a and 18b may indicate one or more initial configurations for game pieces 14, and optionally may indicate game board territory associated with players of the game.

[0016] Fig. 3 depicts exemplary game pieces 14, which are also square in shape so that they substantially conform in shape with at least some of the spaces 16 of game

board 12. Each game piece 14 is generally flat and tile-like, and includes a first face 20 and a second face 22 disposed on opposite sides of each game piece 14. Game pieces 14 are shown in Fig. 3 as groups of two squares, to demonstrate what the two faces of each game piece 14 might look like.

[0017] As shown, first face 20 is distinguishable from second face 22, to designate distinguishable player alignments. The faces 20, 22 may be distinguished by player alignment indicia such as different colors, different graphic representations, different patterns, or combinations thereof. For example, game 10 may include a total of eight game pieces, each of which having a red background on one face and a blue background on the other, as represented in Fig. 3 by the different styles of cross-hatch lines on faces 20 and 22 of game pieces 14.

[0018] Game pieces 14 may further include a graphic representation 24, which may be distinguishable even between pieces of the same color. In other embodiments of the game, player alignment may be indicated by graphic representations 24 of game pieces 14 without regard to other indicia.

[0019] In addition to player alignment indicia such as color, pattern, graphic, or the like, each face of each game piece may bear directional indicia. For example, as shown in Fig. 3, each face 20, 22 further includes an arrow 26, which points to a single edge of game piece 14. Thus, as can be seen by referring to Fig. 1, arrows 26 may indicate adjacent spaces 16 or adjacent game pieces 14 positioned within adjacent spaces 16.

[0020] However, other embodiments of the game may include game pieces marked with directional indicia in configurations consistent with the arrangement of the spaces on the game board. Optionally, directional indicia on a game piece may comprise a plurality of pointers or arrows, which may simultaneously and separately point in different directions.

[0021] Referring back to Fig. 3, it can be seen that arrows 26 need not be consistent with regard to the orientation of graphic representation 24. In other words, arrow 26 may be located above a graphic representation on a first game piece, and thus point towards the “top” edge of the game piece, and located below a graphic representation on a second game piece, and thus point towards the “bottom” edge of the piece.

[0022] As indicated, the described embodiment includes two-sided game pieces 14 each including a first face 20 and second face 22, each face bearing distinguishable player alignment indicia such as background color, and directional indicia such as arrows 26. Other embodiments may integrate player alignment indicia and directional indicia in a single graphic representation. For example, a player alignment may be indicated by a graphic representation of a particular creature, and directional indicia may be indicated by depicting the creature pointing or facing one or more directions.

[0023] Still other embodiments of the game may include game pieces comprising more than two side or two faces. For example, a game piece may have a three-dimensional shape such as a cube, each face of which may bear a combination of player

alignment indicia and directional indicia distinguishable from that on each other face of the game piece.

[0024] A method of game play suitable for use with the described embodiment of the game components is explained in the following paragraphs, and may be understood with reference to Fig. 1 and Figs. 4-13. As will be appreciated, the method disclosed is exemplary and numerous alterations and additions are possible.

[0025] For convenience, the described method will refer to an embodiment of the game played by two players, wherein each two-sided game piece 14 is blue on one face and red on the other. By way of illustration, the blue face of each game piece 14 is represented in the drawings by a diagonal grid pattern, and the red face of each game piece 14 is represented by a pattern of diagonal lines. Thus, one player may be associated with blue (the “blue player”) and the other player may be associated with red (the “red player”). Colors may be assigned, selected at random, or chosen using any appropriate method.

[0026] The pieces may be arranged on the game board in an initial configuration such as that indicated in Fig. 1, wherein the number of game pieces displaying a red face equals the number of game pieces displaying a blue face. Optionally, the game pieces may be placed in predetermined spaces on the board.

[0027] Game play begins by determining which player plays first. In each turn, a game piece 14 may either be moved one space 16 in the direction indicated by arrow 26, or reoriented (or rotated) 90 degrees to point arrow 26 in a different direction. For example, if game pieces 14 are initially arranged as depicted in Fig. 1, the blue player may begin by moving a blue game piece one space or by rotating a blue piece 90 degrees. A game piece may be moved or rotated by the player associated with the color displayed on the game piece.

[0028] Figs. 4-6 depict configurations of game pieces 14 on board 12 and show results of each of a series of possible turns illustrating these concepts. Referring first to Fig. 4 blue playing piece 14a has been moved one space in the direction of arrow 26a. In Fig. 5, red playing piece 14b has been moved one space in the direction of arrow 26b. In Fig. 6, blue piece 14a has been rotated 90 degrees counterclockwise.

[0029] If, after being moved or rotated, the arrow of the played game piece points towards an adjacent opponent game piece, the opponent piece is flipped over to display the color of the played game piece. Figs. 7 and 8 show results of a possible series of turns illustrating this concept. Referring to Fig. 7, red game piece 14b has been rotated so that arrow 26b points toward adjacent blue game piece 14a. Blue game piece 14a may thus be flipped over to reveal the red face, effectively “capturing” that piece, as is shown in Fig. 8.

[0030] Flipped or captured game pieces remain on the game board, and may be played by the player associated with the color displayed on each game piece as a result of being flipped or captured. Figs. 9 and 10 show results of a possible series of turns illustrating this concept. For example, the game piece captured or flipped over to reveal the red face in Fig. 8 may be played by the red player. Thus, in Fig. 9, blue game piece 14c has been rotated 90 degrees, and in Fig. 10, captured red game piece 14a—now played by the red player—has been moved one space in the direction of arrow 26a. After game piece 14a has been moved, arrow 26a points toward adjacent blue game piece 14d, which may be flipped over to reveal the red face.

[0031] If, after being flipped over, the arrow on the newly revealed face of the flipped game piece points towards another adjacent opponent game piece, the opponent piece is flipped over as well. This process may continue during the same turn, as long as the arrow on the newly revealed face of the flipped piece points towards an adjacent opponent piece. However, players may not look or otherwise knowingly influence which way an arrow will point when a game piece is flipped over.

[0032] Figs. 11-13 show results of a possible series of turns illustrating these concepts. For example, in Fig. 11, game piece 14d has been flipped over to display the red face. Thus, because arrow 26d on the newly revealed red face of game piece 14d points at adjacent blue game piece 14e, game piece 14e may be flipped over as well. In Fig. 12, arrow 26e on the newly revealed red face of game piece 14e points toward

adjacent blue game piece 14c, which may be flipped over to reveal the red face. Fig. 13 shows that game piece 14c has been flipped over to reveal the red face.

[0033] Play continues in the manner thus described, with each player attempting to flip all game pieces 14 to one color. Thus, in Fig. 13, the red player has succeeded in flipping all game pieces 14 to reveal the red face, winning the game.

[0034] The following is an example of an instruction sheet, containing a description of apparatus and a set of rules, that might be used for the present game.

CONTENTS:

- (1) Game board
- (8) Double-sided red/blue creature game pieces
- (1) Instruction sheet

THE OBJECT:

Be the player to turn all creature game pieces to your color.

GAME PLAY:

- Youngest player is player 1 (red).
- Each player selects 4 creature game pieces and turns them to their color
- Board is set up as shown. (Illustration)
- Players take turns EITHER
 - A) Moving a creature game piece 1 space in the direction of its arrow, or
 - B) Rotating a creature game piece 90 degrees. (Illustration showing 90 degree turn)
- HOW TO ATTACK
 - o You may flip an opposing piece when you move or rotate one of your pieces and its arrow touches an opposing piece.
 - o If you move one of your pieces and it touches an opponent's arrow, you DO NOT flip your piece.

- When flipping pieces, you cannot look at the bottom to determine the way you will flip it.
- If arrow on a creature that has just been turned over points to another of your opponent's creatures, you may continue flipping creatures over until arrows no longer point to opponent's creatures. NOTE: if arrow of creature you have just flipped from your opponent's color to your color points to a creature already under control, you DO NOT flip it over.
- Play continues until all game pieces are in one player's color.
- Player with all game pieces in their color is the winner.

[0035] As mentioned above, the described method of play is exemplary and numerous alterations are possible. For example, the game may be played by multiple players, each associated with a different background color or other distinguishable player alignment indicia. In an embodiment in which each game piece may bear several different player alignment indicators, each may be associated with one or more players. Optionally, the game is suitable for play by groups or teams of players.

[0036] Various methods of dividing up game pieces among players or teams, and placing game pieces on the game board for game play, are possible. Some embodiments of the game may use less than the total number of available playing pieces, allowing players to choose a specified number of the allotted game pieces, introducing a strategic element. Some methods of game play may involve placing game pieces on the game board at random, in an alternating fashion allowing strategic choice, or according to any appropriate method.

[0037] It can be understood by those skilled in the art that the method of game play may depend to some extent on the configuration of the game apparatus. Thus, in an

embodiment in which plural directional indicia on a game piece simultaneously and separately point in different directions, the method of play may allow a game piece to be manipulated in any number of ways indicated by the directional indicia. For example, if one face or side of a two-sided game piece bears two arrows that point in different directions, a method of game play might allow such a game piece to be moved in either indicated direction, and/or capture or flip over an adjacent opponent's game piece indicated by either arrow.

[0038] Although the game apparatus and method for game play have been disclosed in specific forms, the embodiments thereof as disclosed and illustrated herein are not to be considered in a limiting sense, because numerous variations are possible. The subject matter of the disclosure includes all novel and non-obvious combinations and subcombinations of the various elements, features, functions, and/or properties described herein. No single feature, function, element or property of the disclosed embodiments is essential.

[0039] The following claims define certain combinations and subcombinations of features, functions, elements, and/or properties that are regarded as novel and nonobvious. Other combinations and subcombinations may be claimed through amendment of the present claims or presentation of new claims in this or a related application. Such claims, whether they are broader, narrower, equal, or different in scope to any earlier claims, also are regarded as included within the subject matter of this

disclosure. Where the claims recite “a” or “a first” element or the equivalent thereof, such claims should be understood to include incorporation of one or more such elements, neither requiring nor excluding two or more such elements.